

## **Cultural Intertexts**

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### **Luxurious Cinema Palaces in the Roaring Twenties and the Twenty-First Century: Critical Analyses of Movie Theatres by Siegfried Kracauer and Their Relevance Today**

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#### **Abstract**

Impressive cinema palaces with exterior facades illuminated appealingly at night were significant for the big city life of the roaring twenties. The film screenings in the prestigious buildings were framed by a diverse supporting programme. Siegfried Kracauer dealt critically with the formative tendency towards theatricality in the new large cinema buildings such as the Gloria-Palast in Berlin in 1926. He also discussed the supporting programme and the aspect of distraction in the context of modern mass and leisure culture in a progressive and extraordinary way.

Over the past decade, luxury cinemas have been enjoying a revival. In order to examine today's high-end boutique movie theatres, Siegfried Kracauer's thoughts on large cinemas in the "roaring twenties" in Berlin provide critical impulses. In the first part of my paper, two important texts by Kracauer are analysed. In contrast to previous research, Kracauer's arguments are also compared in greater detail with those by contemporary progressive critics not only in Germany but also in other countries, such as Joseph Roth, Kurt Pinthus, Fritz Olimsky, Kenneth Macpherson, Harry Alan Potamkin and Philip Morton Shand, among others. This also reveals the special nature, quality, and depth of Kracauer's essays. An analysis of modern luxury movie theatres inspired by Kracauer's train of thought follows in the second part of this paper.

**Keywords:** Siegfried Kracauer, history of film, luxury cinemas, film palaces, Weimar Republic

## **Promoting and Containing New Womanhood in the Pages of Photoplay: The Case Of “Little Mary” Pickford and Her Mediated Alter Egos on the Cusp of the Roaring Twenties**

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### **Abstract**

Actress Mary Pickford is perhaps best remembered for her silent-screen persona “Little Mary.” But there was another important aspect to her Hollywood career that is frequently overlooked today: Pickford’s rise to power and fame corresponded with the era of the “New Woman” in U.S. society. This article explores the mediated construction of new womanhood as communicated through the coverage of Pickford’s career between 1918 and 1921 in the pages of the fan magazine *Photoplay*. It demonstrates how *Photoplay* used coverage of Pickford to promote the ideal of new womanhood until 1919, when she became the most powerful woman in American moviemaking by co-founding United Artists with three men. After that, at the start of the Roaring Twenties, the magazine sought to contain new womanhood by presenting Pickford almost exclusively as a child, without continuing to acknowledge her abilities as a savvy movie mogul and grown woman as it had regularly done in the past—until significant changes in her personal life required another noteworthy shift in the magazine’s coverage patterns of this star.

**Keywords:** fan magazine, feminism, new womanhood, Roaring Twenties, stardom

## **Disappearance of the Self and Its Constitutive Outside in Kafka and Woody Allen's Zelig**

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### **Abstract**

Although parallels between Kafka's hybrid characters and Woody Allen's Leonard Zelig have been noted in literature studies (Bruce 1998), the underlying interpretative synergy is not exhausted and occasions a revisit, timely in light of the social tensions of the century-later-present. Juxtaposing counterfactual history with actual highbrow commentary in quasi- or mockumentary film genre allows Woody Allen to transpose Kafka's grotesque into American realm of the 20s and thus Americanize it. The contention of this article is to suggest that Leonard Zelig, a changing man, is a derivative of Kafka's characters, primarily cat-lamb in Hybrid, but Allen's postmodern visual language in Zelig radically alters their inner metamorphoses and hybridity serving as a social critique, if only seen through triviality of its humour. Interpreting Zelig alongside Kafka's Metamorphosis and Hybrid, we can trace genealogy of themes of anti-Semitism, racism and fascism resolve into contradiction of individualism versus petit-bourgeois mass culture marked by commercialization, commodification and assimilation, features that still define our present. The takeaway may be phrased in terms of a constitutive outside. That is, Leonard Zelig, the omnipresent-self, renders certain truth about society predefined by the cult of individualism by re-constituting his lack of individuality as inherently social phenomenon—constitutive outside, and thus disturbing it. In an ironic twist then, Zelig, released around the time of Margaret Thatcher's famous denial of society, can be read as a structuring-absence revealing fiction, that of a non-existent society.

**Keywords:** Franz Kafka, Woody Allen's Zelig, the Metamorphosis, roaring twenties, social ontology

## **No More Hugs: Depictions of the Prodigal Son in 1920s Art and Literature**

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### **Abstract**

This essay examines the parable of the prodigal son in the New Testament and compares it to different visual and literary representations from the 1920s in Europe. The story of the prodigal son revolving around themes such as family, home, resistance, order and restoration will be juxtaposed with texts and art works from the so-called Lost Generation, a generation of artists and thinkers developing and rebuilding new art in a continent shattered by the atrocities of World War I. The essay examines the conflict between generations and worldviews that emerges in the 1920s and the prodigal artists' reorientation in a fragmented world in which it is hard to feel at home.

**Keywords:** 1920s, prodigal son, Franz Kafka, Giorgio di Chirico, Max Ernst

## **Transfer Points: Artistic Intersections and Cultural Transitions in John Dos Passos's Fiction of the 1920s**

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### **Abstract**

John Dos Passos conveyed multiple intersections of art and culture and the spirit of the 1920s in his prose. His novel *Manhattan Transfer* is characterized by intermediality: a combination of theatre, film, and visual art. With this novel, Dos Passos became a chronicler of American life. A passionate critique of modern society runs through *Manhattan Transfer*. The city is presented in this novel as a site of cultural intersections and transition and this focus is matched by the fragmentary qualities of the text. From his war novel *Three Soldiers* through his city novel *Manhattan Transfer*, Dos Passos places his readers in the swirl of the human currents of his time and argues for the human spirit against the forces of a mechanistic world that would crush them. The harshness of the vibrant city is illustrated through the strivings and affairs of these immigrants, Broadway stage performers, journalists, and business aspirants. The relationships between Dos Passos' experimental fiction and modern art and film are explored, along with the cultural transition of the American 1920s.

## **Criticising the Critic: The Greek Modernist Poet G.T. Vafopoulos on Greek Literary Critic Antreas Karantonis**

Dimitris KOKORIS (Associate Professor. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece)

### **Abstract**

Was the chief literary critic of the 1930's, Antreas Karantonis (1910-1982), spiteful and unfair in his critical texts about the poetry of G.T. Vafopoulos (1903-1996) and was Karantonis a critic who adapted to the poetic evolution? The prominent poet of the 1930's generation has expressed the opinion that Karantonis has been unfair to his poetry but research on the critical texts shows that, besides the negative views, Karantonis also expressed some positive ones regarding Vafopoulos' poetry. In addition, the constant critical adaptability that comes as a result of the critic's communication with the shifting poetic codes, and for which Karantonis' work is reproached by Vafopoulos, could be considered as an essential — perhaps even the most essential — virtue of the dynamic function of critical discourse.

**Keywords:** modern Greek poetry, literary criticism, G.T. Vafopoulos, Antreas Karantonis.

## **Inter-Texting Cultures during Pandemic(s): A Pragmatic Approach and Beyond**

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### **Abstract**

Pandemics are characteristic of both The Roaring 20s, with 1920 being the aftermath of the Spanish flu, and 2020s being the onset of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. In such a case, pragmatics (along socio- and psycho-linguistics, discourse analysis, behavioural and mass psychology, and NLP only in the latter ‘20s) is changing as we speak (literally!), forcing us to either adapt or no longer be an active participant in a speech event. We are granted a rare, even if unfortunate, opportunity to witness change in the very fabric of speech acts. Both the linguistic (or the verbal) and the extra-linguistic (or the nonverbal) are now facing tremendous pressure from people living in isolation and from restrictions imposed by authorities, which have resulted in extensive changes in context and in the entire process of communication. Yet, the pandemic has proved, without a shadow of a doubt, that people crave human interaction and they need to inter-text their cultures, their beliefs, their realities, and ultimately themselves to (the) others, in a struggle to avoid alienation and anxiety, to avoid becoming ‘the other.’ Hence, both in the 1920s and in the 2020s, we notice a shift from cultural intertexts to everybody inter-texting their cultures as their only means of communicating themselves.

**Keywords:** pragmatics, context, communication, change, adaptability

## **The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf: Constructing Diasporic Muslim Identities in a Coming-Of-Age Narrative**

Lin LING (Professor, PhD. College of English, Centre of American Studies, Shanghai International Studies University (SISU), China)

### **Abstract**

The paper explores the representation of diasporic Muslim identities in a coming-of-age narrative: Arab American female novelist Mojha Kahf's bestseller *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* published in 2006. It examines how the religious diasporic hybrid identity is mobilized within the female protagonist Khadra Shamy, including the ways she struggles to negotiate her identity across different cultural terrains and gendered, racialised, intergenerational configurations. It attempts to show how these literary representations construct --and help conceptualize--the ways we understand diasporic Muslims in the U.S.

The individual experiences as narrated in the novel illuminate a series of essential socio-political questions facing the community as a religious minority in a secular context. This study will address these questions through the representation of cultural hybridity in the literary narrative within the framework of postcolonial theory. It focuses on three constructs of the novel central to the conceptualizing of a hybrid identity of the female protagonist: firstly, the mirror images and moral panics that generate cultural clashes in the East-West encounter, which foreground, secondly, the predicament of an ambivalent existence of the protagonist as a diasporic individual, and thirdly, the ways she forges her hybrid identity as a New Woman within the diasporic context.

**Keywords:** hybrid identity, American Muslim, post-colonialism, coming-of-age narrative



## **Once Upon a Time: The Author Is Dead! Long Live the All Mighty Quill!**

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### **Abstract**

Perchance the world's greatest advertisement of fairy-tales, Once Upon a Time, the fantasy drama television series featured on Netflix, goes past its entertaining marketing strategies and brings to the fore one of the longest enduring and most polemical poststructuralist theories, i.e. the death of the author and the literary emancipation of characters. The aim of the current paper is to prove, above anything else, that the primary object of Once Upon a Time, the TV series can be construed as one of telling the story of the characters' literary emancipation and the inherent death of the author.

**Keywords:** death of the author, literary emancipation, scriptor

## **“Only in Dying Life”: Ursula K. Le Guin’s Dry Land and Its Cultural Contestations**

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### **Abstract**

In his seminal essay theorizing the concept of heterotopia, “Of Other Spaces”, Michel Foucault insists that his focus is on external spaces. However, given the ability of certain spaces, especially those associated with trauma and torment, to simultaneously be inhabited and inhabit the psyches of their denizens, it stands to reason that some heterotopic spaces are internal as well. One such example is Ursula K. Le Guin’s Dry Land, an inner hellscape which appears throughout her Earthsea series. The Dry Land serves to mirror, invert, and contest not only the world of Earthsea, but also the pervasiveness of Western literary and cultural influences on the genre of fantasy itself. Inspired by classical and Renaissance sources (Homer and Dante) and modernist ones (Rainer Maria Rilke and T. S. Eliot), the Dry Land, a jarring spatial and literary aberration in the context of Earthsea’s Taoist framework, serves to confront both the resistance to the finality of death and the supremacy of the Western literary canon. In doing so, it demonstrates Le Guin’s desire to distance herself from Western canonical influences, while nevertheless highlighting the fact that, given the cyclicity of literary rebellion, she is, in fact, walking in Dante’s and T. S. Eliot’s shoes.

**Keywords:** Le Guin, Earthsea, heterotopia, Dry Land, canon

## **Cyber Experience as a Resource for Making Alternative Worlds in the Georgian Postmodernist Novel *Chewing Dawns: Sugar-Free***

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### **Abstract**

The paper analyses a contemporary Georgian novel – Zura Jishkariani’s *Chewing Dawns: Sugar-free*. The novel belongs to the sub-genre of bio-punk. The aim of the paper was to identify the defamiliarized and ironized socio-cultural processes taking place in the contemporary Georgian society, considering the narratological concept of alternative worlds and the theoretical framework of conceptual metaphor. The outcomes of the research would draw the cultural-intellectual orientations of contemporary Georgian society. Based on these two conclusions, the paper aimed to find an age-long similarity between the social-political challenges of the 1920s and the contemporary problems of the Georgian society. Research has proved that numerous systems of values have been deconstructed and carnivalized by means of a play with alternative worlds. The development of the world depends on the activation of the human brain capacity, which ensures the cognition of the “higher reality“. The literary text under analysis reflects current achievements in cognitive sciences. The mental trips reflect the capacity of the human brain. The text describes the protagonist’s aspiration towards manipulating and stimulating of the human brain. This is the only way to overcome the banality of life. The manner of narration and the idealization of the aim serve the purpose of description of the revolutionary spirit.

**Keywords:** Alternative worlds, Conceptual metaphor, Cyber experience, Social protest, Georgian bio-punk

